A prophetic fantasy by the talented young Brooklyn poet who at ten years of age startled the literary world with the publication of a book of unique and mature verse.

POCAHONTAS

By

NATHALIA CRANE

A boldly conceived dramatic narrative in which the author foreshadows a violent revolution which will someday scourge America.

At the head of the mighty armies that defend America is Pocahontas—descendant and reincarnation of Pocahontas of history—who is discovered and elevated by eight contemporary American poets.

The dramatic and unexpected ending reveals Pocahontas as victorious leader, and as defeated in the one battle which all women like to lose.

Walkersburg, W.Va.
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"'POCAHONTAS' IS ENTIRELY IN NATHALIA'S BEST VEIN."
—William Rose Benet

"EXTRAORDINARY!"
says Louis Untermeyer

"'Pocahontas' will add fresh fuel to the flames of controversy. No outline can give any impression of its curious manner of telling, by turns ingenious and ingenuous, intensely sophisticated and obviously adolescent, exciting and amusing."
—Louis Untermeyer.

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POCAHONTAS
CRANE NATHALIA CLARA

POCAHONTAS

POCAHONTAS

BY NATHALIA CRANE

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HARRISONBURG, VA.

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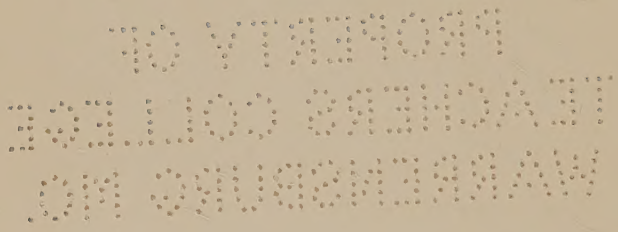
First Edition



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To

Alexander Mitchell Crane

Full twenty thousand years ago
An artist, working late,
Beneath a cavern painting carved:
"TO THEE I DEDICATE."

Palmed scientists have studied it—
A picture of a vine;
But mostly glasses rest upon
That dedicating line.

The ages, eager to erase,
Have passed that hollow tier;
The Hanging Gardens at their belt—
They see no vantage here.

And so the heart is prospered still
While Time's old bravoes wait,
Disturbing not that bonded line—
"TO THEE I DEDICATE."

N. C.

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PRELUDE

You'll surely know her
'Mid the paint and smoke—
Our Indian princess
From old Roanoke.

For when a country
Calls the final guard,
Spirits arise
Recruited by a bard.

And from the past
In doeskin and in bead,
Comes Pocahontas
At her country's need.

CANTO I

POCAHONTAS

CANTO I

The Revolt

Give them but a flambeau,
  Give them but a dirk—
Ivan, Jan and Abou Rah
  All go out to work.

Peace, lowly Peace, heart-tenant not for long,
Residing chiefly in a poet's song.

But ever willing to be wooed from thence—
Heedless of lure or hectic consequence.

Peace, laureled Peace, so lovely yet so plain;
The sworn *familiar* who would not remain.

One time, when meadow chattels in the dun
Believed that understanding had begun;

And humid roses on a careless wall
Presumed security possessed by all;

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One time, when ferns and sentimental toads
Had faith in their impermanent abodes;

We round ourselves the spectres in a quest—
Seeking for her, so common but so blest.

If the revolt that razed our government,
Gave us a queen in lieu of president;

If that revolt but phantom-sired theme—
We still believe truth sometimes sets the dream;

Invades the trance, instructs a forecast act,
Produces dynasties without a fact.

Since this the mood, ten years we must assume
Forfeit to give a calendar full room.

Quickly we come to non-existent dates
When the red flag struck the United States;

Waved insolently, hurled complacence down,
Then fled before the lustre of a crown.

The first of May, and Nineteen Forty-One—
Five years without a wanton sunrise gun.

Our treaty boards had weighed explosive sound,
Had found a peril in the morning round.

The day was clear, and childhood's games were held,
With sweet attentions for the sick and eld.

The night! No Galileo had foreseen,
Yet angry planets strove to intervene.

As tidal surge without announcer comes,
So broke the lurid medley of the slums.

Red tumult raved in every timid mart
And crimson hordes struck at the nation's heart.

Cities were seized like pastry from a tray,
A thousand mayors hung before the day.

In Washington, sedition shook the streets,
A Senate fled, the House went out of metes.

He who was President made strange demand—
He called for troops and none were in the land.

For we had gone beyond the sabre show—
The lively footfalls of a sentry-go.

We knew our navy as an off-shore tug,
And mustered armies on a foyer rug.

And so the massacre could not be stayed;
Our friends, our neighbors, branded, shot or flayed.

Our towers turned to cinders in that night;
Up heaved cathedrals, blown by dynamite.

Bridges were mined, rail terminals destroyed,
The reservoirs with floating graveyards cloyed.

Men wonder now how such a crazed design
Could so surprise a government benign.

But in the years preceding Forty-One
We had denied ourselves a single gun.

The armories, neat lecture halls became;
Dismantled forts forgot they had a name.

And on the ocean's bed, for sake of peace,
The last good cruiser we had built for Greece.

Anarchy sleeps, the dove informed the rose;
A robot jokes while sledge-armed bandits doze.

Like to the worm a Hindoo venerates,
So coils the deadly creed of ancient hates.

Creed that may haunt a household innocent,
Issuing from an unsuspected vent.

Fanged as of old, and stripped of mercy's ban
Strikes ere it hiss: "The Brotherhood of Man."

Viper or vermin, what to them was peace,
Or the new currency that gave release?

Great minds had shown us that the fear of want—
A pulseless geyser in a pigmy font.

A race could almost prophesy its pay
When one hour's work would keep the home a day.

An overplus for luxuries untold
When labor's coin retired the disc of gold.

We were the hopeful dreamers on a ledge
The while a precipice prepared the edge.

Or else dazed reckoners with new machine,
Startled because percentage grew so keen.

We found the nit could top the tiger's dues,
And from a cipher spitting cobras ooze.

In such a time, who quotes a precedent?
Not those who doomed the quartermaster's tent.

Spirits there are, the exiles of each age,
Biding their time to irritate a sage.

Spirits of pythons dead a thousand years,
Spirits of anthropoids long in arrears.

Creeping to cradles sleepy nurse careens,
They enter heirs of stevedores and deans.

And who shall say they oust not chosen soul
And stay to mutilate a heavenly rôle?

When atavisms talk for half an hour,
A scientist would scarce deny them power.

This thing has happened, evening and morn—
A change of soul, and not a garment torn.

But presently we sense a torrid clime,
And then begins the primal pantomime.

A Grecian temple topples from a cliff;
The Alexandrine bookstall in a whiff.

Across a desert lopes a gabbing weird,
And builds a grudge that half the world has feared.

In the wild welter of our Forty-One
Some spoke the truth, but many more were dumb.

Terror for once had organized the wave
On such a scale one view subdued the brave.

Cold slaughter seemed the move that pleased them best;
They dragged the rich man's fledglings from the nest.

Teachers of price, and statisticians skilled,
With rabbi, priest and minister were billed.

Timed to a march, the scaffold did its work,
Encouraged by the flambeau and the dirk.

The leaders now are known to every man—
The brutal Ivan, Abou Rah and Jan.

And from this trio idealed by a drain,
Issued the orgy tunic-ed in a stain.

Cities were grouped, and burned by schedule sheet;
Murder, time-tabled, zigzagged down each street.

Ivan, the torch, and Jan the dripping knife,
But Abou Rah, the mystic in the strife.

For of the evils that arranged our shame—
Least dreaded he who wore the pagan name.

Soothly the leaders of the reds were two,
With Abou Rah, a figurehead in rue.

After the rush of mobs in mad array,
The system of the plotters had full play.

Majors of pillage their commissions earned,
Dealing in ransom, donjoning the learned.

Shackle the young, the apish leaders roared,
Be fair and give the judgment of the horde;

Else they will bloom and whelm in future year;
The lust for learning always marks the peer.

Daughters of Eden handed round as loot,
By Soviet rogues whose uniform a boot.

Oh, many maids the garb of madness wear—
Grovel to hear a footstep on the stair.

Now while the horror stalked a daunted land,
Eight patriotic poets formed a band;

Argued a queen was what a country needs
When over-trustful, misused nation bleeds.

Surely there must be one high chatelaine
Worthy of crown, and carilloned to reign.

These poets were our Crost, with soul afire,
The two Monets, deep Clovis Vanderspire;

Parkham and Arlington, with Kinsey, brave,
And good Jarl Randberg, of the pondered stave.

There was no chance to make a Northern quest
With Vassar, Wellesley, rifled of their best.

In Maryland, in garret, under key,
A garret consecrate to history,

Imaginative Vanderspire began
To raise the border of a ghostly plan.

"There is," said he, "below Potomac's shore,
A maid who matches with the royal lore.

And in her blood (legitimate the strain),
The Princess Pocahontas lives again.

An Indian girl, she tills the hillside loam—
Thus fate provides true royalty at home.

Straight from the Lees and Randolphs of the South—
Her eyes black opals, ruby for a mouth.

Brave as Godiva, sweeter than Elaine,
Darker than all the beautiful in Spain.

Like Pocahontas Number One, her braid,—
The broad low brows that mark an Indian maid.

If we choose her, all strategy is said
When we present the red against the red."

"Where does she dwell," asked William Rose Monet,
"This Number Two, upstarting from the clay?"

"Where does she dwell?" gasped Parkham. "Is she smart,
Smart as that Pocahontas of our heart?"

Then Vanderspire made haste to testify
And calm the cadences of chairs drawn nigh.

"I've heard she lives in Northern Tennessee,
Near Memphis—we can trace her easily.

Once she permits a crown her brows to ride,
Legions will gather. God! A Fundy tide.

The veterans remember Regniville,
The A.E.F. will mass for Royal Will."

Then spoke the poet of the Northern sun,
Voicing his mood, and that of Arlington.

"The plan is good, too good to be quite true,
But Hubert Crost and Ira stand with you."

Grave Parkham tossed his hair—again looked gay;
"My heart and hand," said William Rose Monet.

Keeven Monet and Kinsey sounded horn,
No poet ever failed the dream forlorn.

Jarl Randberg moved and loosed his collar-band;
"Here is a hope that minstrels may expand.

The world goes wrong; the poet's fancy sleeps;
And Brotherhood the ballyhoo of cheaps.

I did not move until Nebraska fell—
And then I saw the bottom of the well.

If we must have an empire, let it be—
And with an empress from the family tree.

If Pocahontas can be found—as said,
I also pledge the red against the red."

Oh, let us to a forage lodge
With chargers duly stalled;
Who waits to wipe the pen is lost
When laureates are called.

CANTO II

CANTO II

The Quest for a Queen

A clearing north of Memphis,
  A hill in Tennessee;
An Indian maiden hoeing corn—
  No thought of crown has she.

The blood of Pocahontas,
  The beautiful and wise,
It shows above the Randolph strain,
  The Hemmings and the Guys.

The blood of Pocahontas,
  The centuries are three;
A frontier promenades again
  The hills of Tennessee.

THE POETS

They came, eight fervid riders,
  On a hazy afternoon,
Across the veldt of blue grass
  To a mountain road, in June.

The wilding threw a signal
To the chinkapin's abode;
It smacks of great importance
When eight riders take the road.

Eight riders with sombrero,
Eight riders in the boot;
The holster-flaps are open
And their carbines swung to shoot.

They follow shrewd instructions
Quite beyond a roadside's lore,
But we have heard their voices
Singing many times before.

And if they ride as lovers,
Or if they ride in fear,
Pass on the word to sentries
To make the highway clear.

Said Crost, who reined an eager sidling roan:
"Here is a guide—that pile of quarry stone;

The road should twist within ten rods, or eight,
Fetch us unto our audience with fate."

"It turns—it turns," quoth William Rose Monet;
"The trees recede—a field—a tilted tray;

A tray with coastline made of cedar walks,
And in the midst a sea of yellow stalks."

Said Parkham: "If no fuzz within my eye
I glimpse a wigwam near that coast you spy;

And by the doorway, on a bench of stone
There sits and smokes a Sioux or Blackfoot crone."

"But in the field," said Crost, "a trifle west,
I see a likeness nearer to our quest."

Tho' poets take unto the statesman's trade
They still can wonder at a dusky braid;

A copper bloom, a shadow-haunted eye—
That single feather pointing to the sky.

Lo, when the group had turned their gaze upon
A bending figure in the totemed corn,

Three centuries were put aside with ease—
They heard harmonic murmurs of old trees.

And intermingled, attared narrative—
The truth Smithsonian, that no firesides give:

Idle the reins; the horses cropped the weed;
From valley far a voice began to plead;

To give interpretative version sound
Of that old story from a camping ground.

POCAHONTAS:

The Truth

Chipmunks!
Blackbirds!
Listen to the smoke;
See above the wigwams
Scowling Pokomoke.

I have heard a powwow—
Smoke God and his mate;
If you slay the hostage
Stags will emigrate.

All the hare and partridge
Hoot the Hunters' Moon;
Higher than the Hawk Star
Fly the fattened loon.

Warriors!
Chieftains!
Cunning as the crow,
Pokomoke is angry—
Corn will never grow.

"That was a *hant*," growled Kinsey, staring round;
"I saw no chanter, but I heard the sound."

A hissing noise from near by ambuscade;
"The squaw," said Randberg, "warns our hoeing maid.

She has the hiss so slick upon the tongue
She may have loaded shotguns in each lung.

Speaking of arms, I trust your glances meet
That oily rifle lying at her feet."

The poets rode into the hillside tray,
Dismounting, found the squaw was made of clay;

Moulded with care—the care a scarecrow needs,
A horsetail wig, plus calico and beads.

Trigged so eight singers, masters of the lay
Believed they saw a squaw, ten yards away.

And while they stared, Dean Parkham sharply spoke:
"You see the pipe—I'm sure I saw the smoke."

"But whence the hiss?" Crost's sudden question burned;
"Not from the girl—her gentle back was turned."

"Who has not heard an unseen serpent hiss?
We waste our time," snapped Kinsey: " 'Twas the miss."

The doubting ones looked through the summer haze;
The Indian girl still hoed the Indian maize.

Hitching their mounts, and grave as Olivet,
They strode to interest that farmerette.

She turned as one by boot-heels made aware
Of visitors, but does not greatly care.

Against her breast the handle of the hoe;
Her ebon opals on half-weeded row.

It fell to Vanderspire to lay the case,
To name the daggers raised against a race.

While bards bowed low, with hand across the vest,
This courtly pleader pointed to the west.

"Oh, Pocahontas,
When a journey's done,
One order all—
Companions of the Sun.

But in that order
There are gems of old,
Thrice summoned
To assist a troubled wold.

Across our clotted vision
Flashed a maid;

Who once saved Jamestown
From the circler's blade.

Who nightly launched
Invisible canoe;
Dared the dark stream
To give a warning true.

And now we ask
Of heroine, in trust;
To teach the new,
The wisdom of the dust.

For this we came
To your half-vertic mead,
Minstrels who pray
That Pocahontas lead.

Blindly we hatched
The meddler from the round;
Our nests awry,
Hope—spillage on the ground.

An alien tribe
From out our tribe has sprung;
New Reds the name,
Though they were never young;

But of that breed
The crocodile is sire;

Churners of mud—
Adorers of the mire.

In but a night
Their communes were at ease;
Hera denied
And Plato on his knees.

In the great Capitol
Brave records burn;
All Washington
Now but a funeral urn.

The Senate stilled,
The House a charnel hall;
And no defense
Since faith betrayed us all.

As last detour,
From out our hearts we took
That roll of vellum
Called 'The Poets' Book.'

Therein the letters
Do reverse the world;
Backward it spins—
All ancient dreams unfurled.

And by the light
Of a translated hope

Mortals may lay
A boardwalk on a mote;

Peruse an orbit—
Satellite unseen;
Or ask that Pocahontas
Be our Queen."

No answer from the brooding hill-girl came.
"Stone deaf," said Kinsey, "cannot hear her name.

"I think the place infected by the dead;
"While Clovis preached, that clay thing moved her head."

"Much more than that," observant Parkham purred:
"Your crone of clay not only moved, but heard.

Also admit that models in a nap
Can lift a rifle, lay it on their lap."

"Men who ride hard—eat not," said William Rose,
"Their eyes odd sonnets oftentimes compose."

"Not now the jest," begged Ira Arlington,
"Sonnets must wait while duty maps a run."

The silent damsel in the deerskin frock
Flashed into movement—gave them all a shock.

Two sentient eyes, a battery concealed,
Raised mask and swept the contours of the field.

Her banded hair with eagle's quill adorned,
Jealous of word, lest princesses be scorned.

With smile that touched the cuplets of the cheek,
In luted tones the mute commenced to speak.

"I am not deaf
And Granny is not clay;
She masks with earth
To drive disease away.

Daubing herself
As if by hornets stung;
Her recipe
Devised to make her young.

With sun below
Our languid pasture walls
The clay departs
To yonder water falls."

She pointed to an arrant plunge of delf
That leaped and tumbled from a hillside shelf.

And as she spoke, the thing bizarre arose—
Strolled off in leggins, clay unto the toes.

The sweet informer no attention paid,
But passed to further comment on the shade.

"Granny, to help
The magic mud to take,
Mixes the clay
With oil of rattlesnake.

I understand
The motive of your quest;
An aeroplane
Dropped warning of the pest.

It named the three
Conspirators in red;
It told of deeds
That shame the Indian dead."

The riders bowed; they knew about the plane.
Then Pocahontas spoke in altered strain:

SONG

My gentlemen, my gentlemen,
Oh, tell me why 'tis so,
A nation dreamt not of a queen
Till times had fallen low?

Had dreamt not of a sovereign squaw
Perchance not dreamt at all,
Till Ivan, Jan and Abou Rah
Drew knife within the wall?

My gentlemen, my gentlemen,
  You ask too hard a pledge
To leave my reservation thus—
  With none to hoe the ledge.

And yet so skilled to flatter one
  You please the wigwam's smoke;
Powhatan's spirit sells again
  The Isle of Roanoke.

And Pocahontas, bare of luck,
  And of her braidings shorn,
Is asked to trade for action "Tam"
  Her little field of corn.

CANTO III

CANTO III
Yea or Nay

"We hear," said Crost, "refusal in your song;
You make us feel we may be in the wrong."

Kinsey was sighing, in excited state.
"Who would believe? She shows a crown the gate.

Not only spooks are in this jumpy place,
But laziness that laps a bygone race.

Will no one speak? Must I be left alone
To show a listless beauty to a throne?

Why does not Ira Arlington move in—
Draw bow across his gallant violin?

You leave persuasion to a western hind,
And yet the West has often changed a mind:

I'll try the wheedle. If she does not yield—
I'm not the only poet in this field."

SONG

Missy, hast thou ever heard the Boom! Boom! Boom!
Voice of Cæsar calling: "Give the front rank room"?

Heard the combat bugle like an angel sing—
"Heroines take station with the Poets' Wing?"

For a cause that falters, or a flag that faints—
Only then the Spirit World will loan its saints;

Send them into battle, with the last hope lost;
Send them forth instructed, "Win at any cost."

Missy, when we ask you as our first recruit,
We make better offer than a marshal's suit.

In a queen's regalia, to the Boom! Boom! Boom—
Pocahontas orders: "Give the front rank room."

When tribal mind is set upon a "No,"
Powhatan's clique, or old Geronimo,

The snowflake's chance; but Parkham, undismayed,
In vibrant tones addressed the stubborn maid:

"We raced with peril for our country's fame—
Our journey's end—the wonder of your name.

Oft, as we loped along the Southern Tier,
We gave the sign to vet and mountaineer.

There is but one—she wears the wampum shell;
True rallier—we ride to ring the bell.

Our scouts await the outcome of this talk;
Must we go back with horses at the walk?

The reds will sack these mountains some fine morn
If you decide to stay and nurse your lawn.

Our strategy, an army corps to raise—
And capture Washington in thirty days.

Three armories there are in Memphis Town
That hold the tube and tons of smokeless brown.

Three near-by cities 'scaped the museum's spell;
Field guns there are, and ample stacks of shell.

We count on bayonets and raiding planes;
Kentucky sorrels for our wagon trains.

In Southern states the reds are few and slow;
A strip untouched from here to Pamlico.

The scouts are signalling from hill to hill
Our slogan: 'Meet the guns in Louisville.'

Oh, Pocahontas, if you fail us now,
We go where prophets hide and wipe the brow.

For your own self, no great elation felt
In dwelling on the moveless blow you dealt.

When husking corn, or opening the pod
You'll wonder why you gave no willing nod.

You'll tremble too when ghosts from honor's fast,
Approach and clear the halyards of a mast;

Haul down the flag of damsel or of dame,
And write an ouster underneath your name."

Eight men leaned forward, waiting the reply;
Hope's cameras sped film in every eye.

POCAHONTAS:

"You see poor girl—her moccasin is torn;
Her lot to stay and hoe the Indian corn.

Granny too old to bid farewell to ease;
Good sirs, forget, and twice forgive her—please."

"Mind not," said William Rose. "By Sunday's clock
We who campaigned—our heads upon the block.'

The hoe fell from the late decliner's hand.
Her gasping inquiries assailed the band.

"Whose heads? Not yours? What secret do you keep?
How dare you make a Randolph's daughter weep?

Whose heads? The truth. Such strange palaver heard—
Surely you do not lack the knotter's word?"

"The truth?" Then Clovis Vanderspire groaned.
"We stand as traitors eight, all uncondoned.

Treason is cried, when patriots do their best,
And fail because the East is not the West."

Out of a thicket bounced a mountain hare,
Uphinged on haunches with a friendly air.

The Indian girl beside the bunny knelt;
Her way to cloak new fervor that she felt.

She spoke again, as though to statecraft bred:
"We must dissolve this romance of the red.

Neither unlearned, nor unequipped am I;
My winters spent in seminaries nigh.

We must correct when cougars scratch our door;
Misuse the color of the sagamore.

It implicates the passion of the peach;
Puts cherries in the class of Captain Teach.

But when a tint is stolen from a star—
We ask for Ivan, Jan and Abou Rah."

As men long blind to glassy boats react,
Embark, and shoot the focal cataract;

Thus our eight poets felt the rush of light,
Saw torches flash before the ports of sight.

Who would not bend, consent awaiting them,—
Acceptance of an empire's diadem.

NEU-WAH-NEE:

"Up from your knees." 'Twas Pocahontas spoke.
"I see the shadow of the cunning smoke.

Up from your knees, my leaders of the brawl;
Here comes sweet Granny from the waterfall."

From brushwood veil stole forth the clay-bath squaw;
Younger than Eden—older than the law.

Gone from her face the mask of sticky soil;
She glittered from the rattler's polished oil.

In garnet gown, with adolescent walk,
She came, her years reduced by crimson chalk.

Campfire adventuress, who knew no fear;
Child of the blizzard and a famine year.

As a papoose, just from her mother's form,
Vased in a slaughtered stallion, from a storm.

Her name, Neu-wah-nee, Maiden Born To Ride;
(Upon a pillow in a pony's hide).

Found by a chief, frost-bitten to the thigh,
Who lived the storm and heard a baby cry.

She knew the meaning of each tribal dance,
Could tell a worthy captive at a glance.

English was hers, learned as a schoolroom Ute;
Tongue steady when disdainful chiefs were mute.

Neu-wah-nee crossed the plaza of the maize
And made her place in council with a phrase.

Cross-legged, her garments spread with lavish care,
The squaw uncoiled advice from fangster's lair.

"Oh, when a lucky rabbit offers paw,
It seems so easy to connive a war.

To muster men with but a poet's reed,
To arm an heirloom with the wampum bead.

But still a listener's eye departs to see
Custer at bay; the hunt at Wounded Knee.

Indeed, it takes a prophetess to tell
What might o'ertake us if the worst befell.

If maids must fight, when drilled to tend the stalk,
We need the tribes—the actual tomahawk.

For if your 'vets' and husky mountaineers
Should meet defeat from Soviet racketeers,

A rear guard—if but one poor Navaho
Would give us time to cross to Mexico."

Neu-wah-nee paused and filled her pipe with care,
Patted the foremost ringlet of her hair.

Parkham replied as speaks a chief to chief:
"Madame, we do not calculate on grief.

A quick advance, a rush, half serpentine—
And Washington presents the Indian Queen."

Neu-wah-nee smiled: "You were a raider born;
The rush should start an hour before the dawn.

Let's say the rush goes forward with a roar—
The queen in teepee—yet there's something more;

For what are queendoms with Neu-wah-nee ill,
Or weaving baskets on a lonely hill?

My pet, who gave a wandering squaw a home,
My humming bird, where tricky armies roam."

"We are eight men—eight poets duly tried,"
Responded Crost: "We thought that you would ride;

Or from a litter watch a great advance—
Something like soldiers pouring into France."

The squaw smoked on. She muttered moodily:
"One painting more; what matters it to me?"

The maize girl laughed: "Neu-wah-nee wants to go
To set a sash and jauntify a bow."

"After a battle," mused the crafty crone,
"Chiefs like to wed a beauty and a throne.

It is not good when any one-flight loon
Aspires unto a daughter of the Moon.

A proud Pawnee, or Sioux with cactus spine
Might do to carry on a royal line."

"Wisest of ladies," broke in Arlington,
"Yourself shall be the chapel of the nun;

A humming bird forever in your eye,
And eight true statesmen always standing by."

"One last request." Neu-wah-nee's orbs were rolled
So that the whites turned all the poets cold.

"I ask that all the tribes be roused with speed,
To fight for one—a princess of the breed."

"Your task is done," and Kinsey drew a scroll:
"Commissioned flyers drop the birchen roll.

From Pigeon's Ranch to Northern border booked—
With not a reservation overlooked."

Neu-wah-nee passed her pipe to Vanderspire.
"Smoke, and remember this—our council fire."

In turn they drew, and blew the vapor forth;
Across the twilight flapped a crimson moth.

CANTO IV

CANTO IV

The Ghost Riders

Pawnee and Ute and Blackfoot
  Have painted with the Crow;
They wait not on the order
  Of old Geronimo.

The pony trails are crowded
  From Rockies to the Blue,
And leading lurid foray
  The bonnets of the Sioux.

Apaches with repeaters—
  Each gun two hundred rounds;
And Sitting Bull is happy
  In the Happy Hunting Grounds.

For they have heard a summons
  Halloo the desert sand—
The Ghost of Pocahontas
  Returns to rule the land.

They ride with coup-sticks waving—
The masters of the raid;
Allies from out oblivion
To give a queen their aid.

LONDON

August the twelfth, and Nineteen Forty-One—
London awaits the fall of Washington.

The hour is midnight, lacking but the gong;
The Thames Embankment laden with a throng.

Scotland and Ireland, Wales and part of Kent,
Walking the fog in front of Parliament.

England's prime minister is due to tell
The House of Commons, who survived or fell,

What side is winning, how the slaughter runs,
And if there's need of stalwart British guns.

For all in England, men of every sort
Remember Pocahontas, once at Court.

The August fog an almanac defies;
Plays curtain—no anxiety to rise.

A turret searchlight tries to thrust a glow
On London bobbies in the triple row.

As sandal thrown may loose the glacier's power,
Big Ben begins to strike the midnight hour.

The House of Commons dizened all in light—
The Five Days' Session waits for news tonight.

Australia, Canada, the benches share;
The House of Lords behind the people's chair.

The great clock booms; the gallery alean
Hears through the walls a noiseless limousine.

All on their feet, for prescience cannot err
When custom times a great prime minister.

But what mistake brings on this hooded maid
With glinting eyes—some secretary jade?

August the twelfth and Nineteen Forty-One—
And England's *First* a daughter—not a son.

She stands where Gladstone, Balfour, George have stood,
Megan of Wales, who wears the pit-girl's hood.

Within her hand the sacred Cypher Roll;
Prime minister, a woman at the goal.

With the abruptness that the British prize,
Megan of Wales commenced to summarize.

In quaint staccato, with appraising glance
Deftly she gave each vital circumstance.

"The grand engagement of the States at war,
A week in progress, still remains a draw.

Losses more fearful than the fields of France;
England may yet be called to break a lance.

From Washington, northeast to Havre de Grace
Stretch the red lines of Ivan, Jan and Rah;

A segment, thrown, rests on the Chesapeake
Where old Annapolis lies in the teak.

The Capital invested, shelled since dawn;
The parallels are ever closer drawn.

Along the ridges to the city's right,
Assaulting columns pour by day and night;

A million men, of overseas the best,
Those landing parties that went into Brest,

Mass now to take the Domal Town by storm;
Within an hour the end—in cypher form.

Now of the patriots—all we seem to ken—
That they are led by unknown Indian wren.

She bears a name connected with the bow—
Our Pocahontas, of the long ago.

The aborigines are at her side,
And minstrels eight her strategies provide.

Her cabinet, the poets of the day—
Are Kinsey, Vanderspire and Rose Monet:

To these the cables add Jarl Randberg's name.
Crost, Arlington, and young Monet's acclaim.

Our Northern Border is a wall of brass;
A word is pledged—no red retreaters pass.

Along St. Lawrence, linking regiments;
No interference—more than any fence.

The bridgehead of Niagara we hold—
The Black Watch there—precaution for a fold.

Staid chancellors of Europe eye our mood;
If armies fail a fleet can help a brood."

An instant—then the House came to its feet;
The cheering ran the benches to the street.

A swarmed embankment bellied into roar—
"Thank God a Welshman's weanie pulls the oar."

The din continued till the Isle of Wight
Put query blunt: "Where are our ships tonight?"

The answer widened pupils none too spry:
"Our latest keels are cleared and standing by."

New cyphers brought from Downing Street with speed,
And England's First once more begins to read:

"Our ship the Corsair, now in Chesapeake,
Gathers from shore the tendencies that leak.

Two cable stations seized for reasons held,
Report fresh mêlées leaping from the knelled.

Exploding mines have blown Mt. Vernon Town;
Historic Alexandria Bridge is down.

Along the ninety leagues, or more, of fight,
A rumor skips: 'The Reds give on the right.

Georgetown in flames; the heavens a smoky wrack;
Even to Chesapeake the sky is black.

Catastrophe's caress no longer stuns—
Unnoted mid the bellowing of guns.' "

The reader paused—a new dispatch in hand:
"Georgetown is taken by a storm command.

Ten miles northeast of Washington there breaks
The gunfire fury of preparing quakes.

Here is a weakness and the Red line droops;
Against this point the Patriots hurl their troops.

The Crimson ranks near Seabrook leave the map;
Two shock divisions through the lucky gap.

There is a road that runs from Washington,
Straight to a school where admirals frilled the son;

Our keel, the Corsair—with the glass of Merg,
Can sweep this road, the Pike to Ladenburg.

It is a broad, with forestry for trim,
An elevated way through tangles dim.

It lies behind the masses of the Red,
Yet on this road now shows the shaven head;

Navy binoculars, averse to pranks,
Report the ponies scrambling up the banks.

A highway packed with Iroquois and Sioux;
The Red are broken and the scouts are through."

As when some ponderous battler takes the ways,
The House was up and shouting in a daze.

The candles flared, by gaunt traditions blown,
And Britain's Prime gave final message tone:

"The rout is on—the scum in fierce retreat,
The Fleet moves in to simplify defeat.

All cypher notes mere detail after this,
Excepting one that names an Indian miss.

Our Pocahontas lays aside the gun—
Her worn battalions enter Washington.

Within the White House, robed in royal gown,
She takes her country's offer of a crown."

A mace jumped from a box and loosed the scene;
Peers hugged each other, heralding a queen.

The Commons raved, the galleries went queer—
Began to chant The Anthem of the Spear.

Outside, the crowds put words to pagan bar—
"Powhatan's girl now rules America."

Far down the Thames, because the hour was pat,
The turrets of a cruiser swung and spat.

Men counting blanks were puzzled till a nun
Remarked: "We shoot the double Twenty-one."

CANTO V

CANTO V

Washington

We helped her from a shell-hole,
  We held her in the rise—
The horror of the front line
  Still showing in her eyes.

The Muses worked where smoking pageants lay—
To make a city pretty in a day.

A day—a year; the restoration done;
Scaffolds depart. Behold New Washington.

An army turned into a minters' camp—
Façades in gold leap from the coiner's stamp.

And all the land this convalescence shares,
A steady moccasin on palace stairs.

Within the sovereign's town, a color change,
Pallor now beautified by pompon strange.

'Twixt Palace White and Capitol, half new,
A lake preempts Paraders' Avenue.

A pond as clear as some transported 'let,
Hemmed all its length by granite parapet.

This wide-flung rand, blocks of historic stone,
Buttresses rise when monuments are blown.

Engraved upon the balustrade austere,
The names of scions of the Empire Year.

The names of privates heroed with a crest,
The names of villages that sent their best.

The horses' numbers of the Fifth Command,
Deaf gunners lost at Rockville, Maryland.

Chiefs of the Utes, Pawnees and glowering Sioux,
With lesser braves who won the Circlet Blue.

With dome deleted stands the Capitol,
Less like a mosque upon a Western knoll.

In the Revolt, a shell destroyed the hive;
Its famous echo perished in the dive.

No vestige of a Moslem bulge remains;
A roof with level platform takes the reins.

Thereon four figures, mounted, stand the guard,
Placed with precision of the compass card.

Four chieftains, in full panoply of war
Hold vigil 'bove the Brahmins of the law.

With bonnet gimped, and tableau lance in rest,
They face the North, the East, the South, the West.

Each hour a warrior fades into a ghost;
Another painted chieftain rides to post.

By turns the tribes attend unto this masque,
Proud of the honor to illume a task.

In the new era, arch and caption stone
Give figured proof, alertness of the throne.

Government lodges, sharp departures show;
Titles rewaxed to string a nation's bow.

The House and Senate long have ceased to be;
Grandees the balloters for sovereignty.

The Court Supreme, by recent ruptures stirred,
Sits as The Empire Bench of Final Word.

The Cabinet, by Eagle Totem known,
Eight laureates—Instructors to the Throne.

One oddity no foreigner o'erlooks—
Old names of states have vanished from the books.

Who wants to find Virginia, deftly goes
To pamphlet tagged: "The Province of the Rose."

Who wants Rhode Island, finds his trouble least;
Listed: "The Province of the River Feast."

New York, "The Province of the Northern Flume";
Florida, "Province of the Orange Bloom."

And so through all the Forty-eight that are;
Disturbed no more by Ivan, Jan and Rah.

But what of her, the Queen, in Palace White—
That Indian girl who won the torrid fight?

In halls made brighter by wild berry stains,
A hillside Pocahontas nobly reigns.

Her counsellors, eight poets of award,
True laureates who dared to draw the sword.

With words discreet, they saved a million Reds
When the new Empire clamored for their heads.

But the conspirators—three carmine pards—
They were denied the bolster of the bards.

The three-beyond a pardon engineer,
Awaited judgment all a busy year.

The angry Queen had lists of brutal crimes;
She turned no ear to palliative rhymes.

All tricks that were—all evil thoughts that are,
She credited to Ivan, Jan and Rah.

When village bands again resumed the strain,
And colleges salaamed a class again;

The Queen an audience convened one night;
Summoned the poets to the Palace White.

They passed the house guard drawn from painted Sioux,
Came to the Fern Lodge, once the Room of Blue.

In this retreat with forest trailage hung,
They found the Queen, her Indian girls among.

Nona, Wattana, Fawn and Evening Breeze,
Reared near the pawpaws and the honey bees.

Brookside, Orrara, Willow Bud and Dew,
The night's imaginings of Ute and Sioux.

Eight beauties from the campfires of the West;
Ladies-in-waiting, clad in doeskin vest.

Eight paragons—the pick of all the plains;
Not one to match the loveliness that reigns.

Upon a mat of rushes from a stream
An old squaw sat and smoked with eyes adream.

Graver than sachem sucking peaceful stem,
She sorted photographs to find a gem.

Pile after pile, at least a score or more,
Pictures of princes from each foreign shore,

Pictures of heirs upon alliance bent,
Europe, Morocco, all the Orient.

Neu-wah-nee scowled, a smoker deeply vexed;
She scanned a face, then shuffled to the next.

Divanned in state, sweet Pocahontas rose—
"Neu-wah-nee likes the pictures with a pose."

With this—and that, and ceremonial o'er,
Neu-wah-nee spoke from rushes on the floor.

"The Queen lacks interest in princely stars;
She'd rather talk of hanging Jans and Rahs.

To me, the great excitement of a state
Is when a queen selects a warpath mate;

Kisses a picture—tears up torture plans,
And tells Neu-wah-nee to announce the banns.

Long have I lived—the dub of Indian schools,
But now I know that even queens are fools."

All heard the door guard's sleepy knife blade click;
The Indian girls their belts commenced to pick.

A pause—so long the summer air grew raw;
Then Pocahontas sank beside the squaw.

"Granny knows not that a delay to mate
Is measured by the welfare of our state.

The Queen desires to speak with Council now;
All others leave while we discuss a vow."

The Indian girls trooped out like timid does;
Neu-wah-nee, on the rushes, studied pose.

So used was Council to this extra one
That instantly the session was begun.

A portal creaked; a sentry slipped from sight;
The lights went up—a glow of amber bright.

Queen Pocahontas from the dais spoke
Gravely, as one who meditates a stroke:

"Masters of thought,
And singers of renown,
The chief supporters
Of an anxious crown,

Tonight I give
  Instructions that must span
The fate of Ivan,
  Abou Rah and Jan.

The three who drenched
  Our realm with bloody flow
And made the dawn
  A picnic for the crow.

Tomorrow noon
  In Capitol produce
These prisoners
  For banishment or noose.

Allow adornment—
  Costumes they may want;
Let them harangue
  Or even broadly taunt.

Those who must face
  The ember and the stake
Draw fortitude
  From noises in a bake.

We would have all
  The embassies at hand
To see how just
  We are to burning brand.

Both chambers called,
Our province princes spurred;
In russet gown
The Bench of Final Word.

When we have drawn
Our sentence from a calm,
Hush all applause,
Tornado in the palm.

Withdraw the captives
By a secret route,
Lest some civilian
Throw the arm to shoot.

For anger camps
In heart when country slips;
And vengeance stalks
The pathway of the lips."

CANTO VI

CANTO VI

The Queen's Judgment

High noon. A single gun from Navy Yard;
In Empire Hall the clanging ports are barred.

None may now enter Capitol till men
Have heard the judgment of the Diadem.

Packed in pavilion, big as aerodrome,
Peon and prince, from Panama to Nome.

Grandees in gold; each province head arrayed
In tunic blue, and girt with lawful blade.

To right and left, and near the glimmering throne
The fragmentary flags in battle flown.

Before the dais, cloaked as seers serene—
Eight laureates, the Council of the Queen.

The Bench of Final Word in russet gown,
Divided, flank the emblem of the Crown.

Nave gates go down; armorial panels snap—
To keep ambassadors on native map.

From channeled walls the painted Sioux appear,
Dread signal that the judgment Time is near.

The Indian girl, robed for a somber mood,
Looks down upon the risen multitude.

New chivalry, so novel to the eye,
Has grown portentous, for three men may die.

The silence waits the phrasing on a card;
A herald shouts: "The Sergeant of the Guard!"

Far down the aisle there sounds the footstep groomed—
A cadenced squad advancing with the doomed.

The clinking chain, the bondsman of the brute,
Is heard above the time-beat of the boot.

Before the throne the guard comes to a halt;
The hall is stung as by electric jolt.

Ivan, red shirted; Jan is cinnabar;
Nude as the moon, the form of Abou Rah.

The blasting rudeness raised an angry roar;
The naked one knelt humbly on the floor.

Bowed was his head, as child misunderstood,
Or lost forever in a lonely wood.

All thought him crazed till Council gave the light—
"The prisoner is well within his right.

The Empire places chain upon the hand,
But acts not as costumer for a band.

The Crown permits these Reds a last huzzah,
Freedom of speech; the garb of Abou Rah."

The Herald read: "Ivan, your hour has rung—
The Crown's own gift—the usage of your tongue.

Plead now, or else fall back unto the guard;
Haste rules when tragedies are triply starred."

IVAN:

"What do I want? And what do all men want?
Not to be serfs of check clock and of taunt.

What do I think?" He beat his massive chest
As though an anthropoid within were guest:

"Why am I here, Oh, Foolish on a stool,
You savage truant from an Indian school?

If we had liberty, no toiler's day,
Free rum, fair wives, a tired world at play.

No church, no duties to a governed sty;
The right to live robustious till we die.

Not to be jailed within denial's shell,
And fed on laws—the cookery of Hell.

Lastly, when down, to bite like men with teeth
The evil foot of bawdy with a wreath.

Oh, phony queen, nicknamed from ghostly slut,
We know your kind, the feathered butternut."

Ivan slunk back, a sneer upon his face;
The guard closed in; Jan took the speaker's place.

JAN:

"This hall reminds me of a lawsuit in a ditch,
The jury packed with poodles of the rich.

Who knows or understands our luck?
We are the kings—you and your court the muck.

Your embassies—dead litters of the dog—
And you, my Queen, the mistress of the morgue.

Hunched in your chair, you sit accusing Jan—
Whose only crime—the Brotherhood of Man."

The prisoner screamed. A motion from a bard;
Quick order from the Sergeant of the Guard.

The Herald read: "The last is Abou Rah:
Rise and advance, Oh, pleader at the bar."

The naked one arose and stared around,
Glared at the tiers from fathoms of a swound.

Youthful he was; slight, as for study bred;
Long recognized a captain of the Red.

He mumbled the mild data of a trance;
Then stopped: "I also fought for you in France."

The Queen exclaimed: "Put blanket on this man;
He may be proved a wounded veteran."

ABOU RAH:

"I was a prince,
Of regiment forgot,
We passed Suez—
The sandy isthmus slot.

I was a prince,
And wounded with the van;
I was a prince—
A prince from Hindustan.

Long time I lay,
And then I wandered far—
And to and fro—
Until America.

And here I met
With Ivan and with Jan;
The war goes on—
No prince from Hindustan.

And so I pledged
My service to this shore
Nor knew the cause
Unlike the one before.

I lay no blame
On Ivan, none on Jan;
The one to blame—
A prince from Hindustan.

All men who passed—
From rise to set of sun;
They were myself—
And not another one.

Some wept, some laughed,
And some spread rug to pray;
I wept, I laughed,
Or knelt beside the way.

Some moaned, some raved,
Some died on leper's shelf;
And all were dim
Reflections of myself.

Before me now
Projections from within;
A misty scene
Of spirit origin.

What is the soul?
An æon in a jar?
That gives itself
The name of Abou Rah.

Once I believed
The good might learn an art—
And helped by fasting
Peer within the heart.

Then Abou Rah,
Sought conquest through a prayer,
Bound natural eyes
To 'scape the shadow's snare.

One day while groping
Long a way severe,
A tiny tambourine
Was shaken near.

He raised the bandage,
Hoping prophet's power,
And saw a humming bird
Above a flower."

Drums rolled; a trumpet echoed 'gainst the walls;
The Queen arose and with her stood the stalls.

POCAHONTAS:

"Strike off the linkage from the prisoners three—
The Crown deals with cadets who cannot see."

The chains were drawn, the leaders' wrists were clean,
A Sioux stepped in between them and the Queen.

Again the drums, and then the Crown began:
"The Empire speaks to Ivan, Rah and Jan.

There is in life a certain deadly ill
That halts a rider halfway up the hill;

Touches the tot while willow hammock sways,
Plunders the aged of a feeble gaze.

Stroking a forehead, whispers: 'See no more—
Or only see the thing long known before.'

This malady, imperative in suit,
Makes seizure of the human and the brute.

It bears a name. The Halted Cataract;
Squats in the eye, distorting every fact.

This is the woe of Ivan, Jan and Rah;
Betrayed, they see, but know not where they are.

There is a crystal in the mortal eye
Clearer than quartz that plays the mountain spy.

But when this oval takes an evil hue,
Victims go veiled, and doubt that life is true.

So cunning is this hidden malady
That only wizards, with the glass, may see.

Since capture, these three rebels under spell—
Watched by great surgeons, authorized to tell.

Their true reports most carefully unfold;
The cause of wars, and wickedness untold.

In Abou Rah we find the state's excuse to serve—
A rare distortion of the optic nerve.

Our Justice agents say he never fought,
But stood in battle, lost in smiling thought.

Judgment for these three men, with mercy blent,
Surgical cure, or else straight banishment.

Judgment with choice—the Crown has soothly said;
The Queen demands an answer from the Red."

IVAN:

"I scorn your dirty Indian torture plan
And take my banishment—an honest man."

JAN:

"Greased squaw, I am the owner of my eyes;
I'll keep them as a consolation prize."

ABOU RAH:

"I bless the hand
Inhabiting this scene,
Where Abou Rah
Takes bounty from a queen.

The clock goes round;
A pauper's heart is large—
Tiberius
No greater with his barge.

Gratitude burns;
The galleries of Saul,
May still retain
An inch or two of wall;

May shift the sign
That cluttered till today;
The sign that reads:—
All space has gone away.

And if the gift
Of vision is bestowed,
No almoner
Shall ask a better ode.

An ode all good,
But colorful and sweet,
In place of masterpieces
Of defeat."

CANTO VII

CANTO VII

The Courier

The summer Capital, for maid's repose.
Was in Virginia—Province of the Rose.

In year that followed judgment of the Red,
The Queen was stricken—took unto her bed.

When autumn came, in convalescent's cloak,
She sought that summer home called Roanoke.

Physicians none, so negative the ill,
But herbs and roots Neu-wah-nee brewed with skill.

Great lawns there were; dark groves that bore the cone,
And quietness that calms a telephone.

A lodge with lounges, chambers for a host,
Wherein retirement verified its boast.

The Council there, lest an insidious fire
Stampede a cheek, or frighten signal wire.

Upon the stairs that led to slumber light,
A sullen squaw sat smoking day and night.

Always at call and muttering stealthy charms—
Neu-wah-nee watched to halt the new alarms.

She gave the bulletins from couch unseen
Where Indian maidens comforted the Queen.

To Vanderspire she told the creepy tales;
The poets weighed her hints on wobbling scales.

NEU-WAH-NEE:

"Last night with lute she made herself a croon;
She sang the lover's song: Oh, Indian Moon.

'Oh, Indian Moon—
Oh, Moon that twice deceives;
Your words the rain—
The rain upon the leaves.

Oh, Indian Moon,
Oh, Moon beyond all shame;
Last night to you
I told my warrior's name.

Oh, Indian Moon;
Oh, Moon of mellowed lies;
No campfire seen?
And yet you float the skies.' "

"Why does she blame the moon?" asked Arlington,
"Damsels in love, praise all the moon has done.

Possibly here we find ambition's trace—
Design to bind the ballads of a race."

"If she would talk with us," said Rose Monet,
"Things might grow better, even in a day."

And while they argued, down the stairway flew
Nona, the Ute: "The Queen wants all of you."

They went above, to evening room in green,
On a low couch she lay, the ailing queen.

Two red spots burned; her eyes were all afire;
"Take down confession, for our heart doth tire."

Fearful, the statesmen gathered near the bed,
And Pocahontas spoke with pillowed head.

POCAHONTAS:

"I gave an order unbeknown to you,
My friends, my counsellors, forever true.

You may recall that Abou Rah, whose eyes
We made excuse for mercy's enterprise."

CLOVIS VANDERSPIRE:

"We do recall—a man misunderstood;
But none the less, a gentleman, and good.

We later learned he was of royal flow,
Prince from the Indus, where young Buddhas grow.

Heir to a city birthed 'ere Genghis Khan
Sent his surveyors into Turkestan.

In the World War, with Turbans of Patrol—
His name upon the Rajahs' honor roll."

POCAHONTAS:

"You think him brave, and of a goodly sort?
We thank you, Clovis, for a noble thought.

Often I've wept and dreamed of knives at night;
Yet our decision helped the prince's sight.

And you remember that he went away,
Across the seas two years ago today.

Ah! When he went, altho' there was some pain;
He said: 'I used to daub; I'll try again.' "

RANDBERG:

"He was no Red; he was a trance-struck khan;
Touring the daze, as many another man. . . .

Wounded, half blind—how could he ever draw
Conclusion that in France—a different war.

My own blunt thought is that I wish him here;
But not his tailors—they were always queer.

PARKHAM:

"I rather think a little red is verve—
Providing countries keep a gun reserve;

Isaiah was red; and Moses—he was red;
And Miriam you couldn't keep in bed.

The dog gets red; the parrot has its fit;
Sometimes it strikes a celebrated wit."

POCAHONTAS:

"But let me clear the canker from my mind;
I cheated—secretly an order signed.

Upon a morn I did my council flout—
I asked our Justice chief for keenest scout.

A youth was sent—a cherub for the task—
He frowned and said: 'I own the fox's flask.'

Then go you forth, and find that Abou Rah
Beyond the seas—beyond Arabia.

We have no clue except a city's name—
Lost Aracanda that no maps proclaim.

And if you find him, bid him come, and soon;
And give this ring—the Totem of the Moon.

My courier—you should have seen his face;
He promised he would never leave the chase.

And now I fear the name but half embrowed—
And Aracanda less than puff-ball's cloud."

PARKHAM:

"No cheat I see—but friendship, very rare;
You saved the prince; most anyone would care.

Hear Kinsey laugh; and Arlington, he smiles;
You beat the Council by a million miles."

"If this is called 'confession,' " said Monet,
"Then William Rose adds: 'Blessed is the day.' "

"Good Lord," cried Vanderspire, "there clings to me
The faded cross-stitch of a memory;

For *Aracanda*, as a trace of musk
Challenges from a void's derisive dusk.

This *Aracanda* of the Morphean nooks;
Asia is full of names that miss the books.

Or it may be an obsolete refrain—
Like Albion—Hispania for Spain."

POCAHONTAS:

"All is not told; the quest has been in vain;
My secret scout, he never came again.

I bade him do what burly frontiers dread.
Alas! I know my courier is dead."

KEEVAN MONET:

"My Queen, one messenger a bagatelle;
We lost a thousand to the roadway shell.

We'll send the bureau, tongued by foreign birth,
And find good Abou Rah, if he's on earth."

NEU-WAH-NEE ENTERS:

"That snaky telephone in lower pass,
It buzzes like a flathead in the grass.

I put old Two Tongues to my earring bar;
A sutler's talk: 'Clear liar is Harry Gar.' "

A wall connection droned till Rose Monet
Unclasped the piece to make a sick girl gay.

A jest, he thought, would ease a silence shy,
Or plant a sunrise in a dreary eye.

The telephone, a government device;
An interloper might not know the price.

But Rose Monet grew serious as he gave
Delayed despatch, a cartel from the grave.

THE MESSAGE

"Clear wire for Havre de Grace—the Queen;
Three-One! Three-One! Waive Washington routine.

Clear wire for Havre de Grace! Who takes it down?"
"Monet, Queen's Counsel—speaking for the Crown."

"Clear wire for Havre de Grace—ship in from sea
Has dropped a courier for her Majesty.

The ship—a freighter called the Coral Land.
The courier—*Three-One*, from Samarkand.

By navy plane that runs the double stroke
Cross ninety miles, he flies to Roanoke.

The night is dark; it may be hard to land;
Start torches for *Three-One* from Samarkand."

POCAHONTAS:

"Nona, Wattana, Fawn and Evening Breeze,
Unlock the beacons—spark the hollow trees.

Brookside, Orrara, Dew and Willow Bud,
Fix audience room, with all the lights aflood."

The poets ran—"a rider from the dead";
And Pocahontas halfway out of bed.

"God's providence," said wondering Arlington,
"If decent hope—two words, or only one."

Already shadowed lawns commenced to shine;
The Indian girls had fired the hollow pine.

And not too soon, for in a starless lane
Hobnobbed the motors of an aeroplane.

The fields aglow, the lodge a blaze of light;
Downward it swooped—a falcon of the night.

Full robed the shivering queen in audience room,
Thought of a ring—the Totem of the Moon.

And in they trooped, the girls still flushed by fires;
The poets' voices—strummings of the lyres.

Monet led forth a youth whose face was scarred,
And auburn hair by whitened patches marred.

Parkham announced—a herald close at hand:
"Your Majesty: Three-One from Samarkand."

POCAHONTAS:

"Welcome Three-One; we scarcely need to ask,
If sorrow journeyed with the fox's flask."

He knelt and kissed the hand she gave to him;
"Speak," said the Queen, "my courier from the Rim."

THREE-ONE:

"A long, long journey—buffet ever near,
And my report—the thumb-sketch of a year.

Arabia—the blue Caspian's shore;
A thousand hutteries; a thousand more.

Always the question—Aracanda—where?
Always the answer was a stolid stare.

Jungles and hills; now North, now South I went,
Drawing my net around the Orient.

Torrents cried back, and sandstorms inked the scene;
These did not halt the Courier of the Queen.

Hurt in Bokara, on I went again,
Cross barren bowl, iniquities of plain.

The ground crept up—I trod a ribbed plateau,
Tricked with deep gorges, smatterings of snow.

One night I reached a turn where cliffside dipped;
Before me walked a lanterneer with script.

An old man, Greek, Arabian or Kurd,
Reading by candlelight an ancient word.

I ran, and cried: 'What road?' He waved a hand:
'The poets' Road—the Road to Samarkand.'

My heart beat fast: 'Oh, Poet—Greek or Kurd,
You may of Aracanda sometime heard?'

He touched my arm: 'All scholars understand
That *Maracanda* is our Samarkand.

The name is right, all but the missing M,
Easy to drop an organ from a stem.

Yonder your city—just below that star,
Now ruled by king, the ancient line of Rah.'

At sunrise we had passed the city gate;
It was a place of mosques of wrinkled date.

Arabs and Persians, youths from Tartary,
Strolling the streets, absorbed in poetry.

Tombs of the great, and marble cuts, so fair,
I wasted half a minute in a square.

Jade terraces, with Kasmir guelders dressed;
And often doorways, carved with Timur's crest.

The king was old, and many titles bore;
He had a son, but just returned from war.

This prince, described, like ferrule-fitted quest,
But in retirement, would see no guest.

The king's command: 'Our palace, private clime—
Our son is ill; intrusion is a crime.'

The palace old, but hemmed by bastioned grounds;
Buttress and tower and other watchful bounds.

There was one spot fit for an upward crawl;
Footholds appealed, and so I climbed the wall.

Looked down upon a rest resort for gods,
Where fount is lulled, and sleepy blossom nods,

There at an easel, and with brush-filled jar,
The one I sought—elusive Abou Rah.

I dropped within; so silently I fell
No interruption of the painter's spell.

I came upon him, meekly, from the rear,
Looked o'er his shoulder—felt the startler's spear;

For there before me, kirtled in yestreen—
Stood Roanoke—Her Majesty, the Queen."

POCAHONTAS:

"Go on—you saw the Daughter of the Bow;
I do not wonder you were startled so.

Go on—go on—our picture on a stand;
Go on, great courier from Samarkand."

THREE-ONE:

"Your Majesty, the vision was so true,
I dropped to knee, expecting sign from you.

The sands of Asia dwindled to a dune
As forth I drew the Totem of the Moon.

The gift to Abou Rah; his face went white;
I read the words my Sovereign did indite.

An artist wept; placed signet on his hand.
'Tell her I take the Road from Samarkand.

Tell her I love—although the way be far—
No way too long for love, and Abou Rah.' "

The messenger advanced and opened palm
Wherein there lay a circlet graved with charm;

A ring with ruby tasseled to a rune;
A ring to match the Totem of the Moon.

THE MESSENGER:

"This for the Queen, that she may understand
A prince has bade farewell to Samarkand."

POCAHONTAS:

"No courier I ever heard or read,
Went on and roused the Cantons of the Dead.

This you have done; your scars and whited hair
Near to our heart, and honor is our care."

THE MESSENGER:

"Your Majesty, the Courier of the Throne—
Number Three-One—he did not come alone."

A curtain swayed; a voice from falling star—
"THE PRINCE OF ARACANDA—ABOU RAH."

Tunic-ed in white, with Turban of Patrol,
The scimitar that won the Rajah's Roll.

Oh, World, where symbols meet and understand
The figured past, the Road to Samarkand.

POCAHONTAS:

"Prince, you are welcome; words are often flowers;
We so intend, though little skill is ours.

No moon tonight; hangs low the pine tree smoke;
Prince, you are welcome thrice to Roanoke.

The court is happy; poets, read the soul;
Upon the lawns with Abou Rah we stroll."

THE END

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